THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Government have been informed by the Russian authorities that the Trade Representation of the former USSR continues to perform its functions as the Trade Representation of the Russian Federation in India.

As regards the information centres, Government have no information that the Russian authorities intend to close them.

(b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

Gas and Oil Reserves near Bombay High

1605. SHRI GOVINDRAO NIKAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether gas and Oil reserves have been found near the Bombay High;

(b) if so, the details thereof ; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to utilise them?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (c). During 1991-92, a total of 3 oil and 2 gas strikes have been made in the Western Offshore. More work is required to be done to establish the extent of reserves.

[*English*]

Hindi Training to Non-Hindi Speaking Officials

1606. SHRI PROBIN DEKA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total strength of Non-Hindi speaking Officials in the Union Government offices located in the North East Region;

(b) the number out of them have been given training in Hindi so far and number out of them are yet to be given training;

(c) the action plan to give training in Hindi to the remaining Non-Hindi speaking officials;

(d) whether there has been a downward trend in the number of officials appearing in the Departmental Hindi examinations i.e. Prabodh, Praveen and Pragya during the last three years; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF THE PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) 18,056.

(b) (i) Trained - 1,254.

(ii) Yet to be trained - 16,802.

(c) Whereever sufficient number of trainees are available, full time training Centres under the Hindi Teaching Scheme have been set up. Elsewhere part-time centres have also been set up to meet the lower training requirements. Apart from this, training centres under departmental arrangements are also run in some cases. Employees are provided incentives for passing prescribed examinations under the Hindi Teaching Scheme through their own efforts as well.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.